

The Beauty 861

Chapter 861 Unique Master Technique (2)

"Although there were some unexpected events at this martial arts conference, as I understand, the competition has already determined a winner. Therefore, as the host, we should proceed according to the rules. Now, let's invite the winner to the stage."

With the conclusion of the host's words, Wang Hao walked up with the golden statue.

"Mr. Wang." The host smiled at Wang Hao, clasping his hands in congratulations: "Congratulations on becoming the winner of this martial arts conference. Is there anything you'd like to say?" The host gestured, indicating for Wang Hao to say a few words publicly.

Wang Hao stepped to the front of the stage, opened his mouth to deliver a few words of victory appreciation. However, he quickly noticed that few people in the audience were paying attention to him; instead, they surrounded Ling Chen, chattering animatedly. As the main character of this victory, Wang Hao was utterly sidelined.

Seeing this scene, Wang Hao felt extremely displeased, his expression exceedingly unpleasant. He had initially wanted to say a few words, but now had no desire at all.

"Mr. Wang, do you have anything you'd like to say?" Seeing Wang Hao hesitate, the host couldn't help but urge him.

"Hmph!" Wang Hao flicked his sleeve, coldly stating, "I have nothing to say." With that, not waiting for the other party to respond, Wang Hao directly walked off the stage. At that moment, he felt like a clown. Rather than continue to make a fool of himself on stage, it was better to leave quickly, to avoid total embarrassment.

Wang Hao's departure did not attract much attention; even the organizers merely sighed helplessly without much retention. In fact, they also understood that with Ling Chen's contributions before them, no one cared about anyone else, much less who the winner was.

Moreover, in every aspect, Ling Chen's actions this time indeed outshined Wang Hao a lot more. Not only did he save everyone, but more importantly, he saved Tong Zhentian.

Amid the crowd's thanks, Ling Chen's mouth was almost numb from smiling. Fortunately, with Tong Zhentian's help later, Ling Chen managed to escape the fervor and return to the villa.

After resting for a while, seeing it was getting late, Ling Chen decided to stay there for the night and set off for East Sea City the next day.

Not having seen Nanrong Wanqing for a while, he missed her terribly. Moreover, with such major events happening without any news, he couldn't imagine how worried Nanrong Wanqing must be.

"Mr. He."

"What's up?"

"I'm going out for a while; I'll be back shortly."

"Do you need me to accompany you?"

"No need." Ling Chen waved with a smile: "I'm just going to pay a formal visit to Elder Tong. Since I'm leaving tomorrow, it's only right to say farewell."

"Alright then." He Ziyun nodded: "Tong Zhentian is a veteran in the martial arts, remarkably skilled, and a master on the Heavenly List. It's beneficial for you to maintain a good relationship with him."

Leaving the villa, Ling Chen took the quiet path to Tong Zhentian's villa. Because the villa Tong Zhentian previously lived in was destroyed and in ruins, he had moved to another place a bit of a distance from where Ling Chen was staying.

As Ling Chen approached the villa, he suddenly saw someone walking out of the entrance; it was Wang Hao. Seeing Wang Hao's gloomy and depressed demeanor, Ling Chen couldn't help but be curious.

What's going on?

While pondering, Wang Hao seemed to notice Ling Chen approaching and his gaze instantly turned icy cold.

When the two met, Wang Hao stopped in his tracks, staring straight into Ling Chen's eyes, speaking coldly, "I find you truly an obstacle on my path forward."

Hearing this, Ling Chen was slightly stunned, not understanding what Wang Hao meant.

"Ling Chen, don't be too pleased with yourself. Just you wait. Even without their help, I'll surpass you sooner or later." After speaking, Wang Hao snorted coldly and strode away.

Watching Wang Hao's back as he left, Ling Chen was very puzzled. He hadn't provoked him, so why speak such harsh words?

Crazy!

Ling Chen muttered to himself, then walked to the villa's entrance and knocked on the door.

Before long, the door opened, and Tong Ye, dressed refreshingly, appeared inside. Seeing Ling Chen outside, Tong Ye's lips curled slightly as she smiled: "You're here! Please come in."

"Thank you! Miss Tong, is Elder Tong here?"

"My grandfather's inside; he was just talking about you. I didn't expect you to arrive so soon."

He was talking about me?

With curiosity, Ling Chen entered the living room, only to see Tong Zhentian dressed in loose training clothes, sitting on the sofa, holding a cup of fragrant tea, watching a Peking opera on TV, humming a tune.

"Elder Tong." Ling Chen stepped forward, clasped his hands, and respectfully saluted.

"You're here!" Tong Zhentian looked at Ling Chen with a full smile, gesturing to the seat beside him:
"Have a seat."

Ling Chen nodded and sat down next to Tong Zhentian. As soon as he sat down, Tong Ye brought over a freshly brewed cup of tea.

"Xiao Ye, go upstairs first. I have something to talk about with Ling Chen."

"Yes." Tong Ye obediently responded, then turned and walked up the stairs.

After Tong Ye left, Tong Zhentian turned off the TV and looked at Ling Chen: "You should have seen Wang Hao just now when you came over."

"Yes." Ling Chen didn't ask further. He knew that things that shouldn't be asked should be left unasked. If Tong Zhentian wanted to tell him, he would do so without being prompted.

"Wang Hao's master and I were old acquaintances, with decades of friendship. Unfortunately, his master left this world early, leaving Wang Hao alone at Yangxin Pavilion. Wang Hao is quite talented and has good aptitude; within just over twenty years, he became a master on the Earthly List. Across the world, no one can match him." Saying this, Tong Zhentian glanced at Ling Chen beside him, suddenly realizing something, and tapped his forehead with a laugh: "Look at me, almost forgot about you. I take back what I just said; besides you, no one can match him."

Ling Chen humbly smiled: "I'm not as good as you say."

"I heard from Wang Hao that during a martial arts contest at Yangxin Pavilion, you once defeated him?"

"Yes. But that was just luck; truly, in terms of strength, I'm not as good as him."

"Although your strength is still behind his, in many other aspects, you surpass him greatly." After a pause, Tong Zhentian continued: "Do you know the main reason Wang Hao participated in this martial arts conference?"

"Isn't it to connect with more Earthly List masters?"

"No." Tong Zhentian shook his head: "His purpose is actually straightforward, to seek a master, to take me as his master. That day, Wang Hao came to me, expressed his intention, and in consideration of old friendship, I neither refused nor agreed to him, but instead gave him a test. If he could win among the Earthly List masters, I would give him a chance, to accept him as a registered disciple."

Chapter 862 Unique Master Technique (3)

"And what was the outcome?" Ling Chen asked.

"There's no need for me to say the outcome, I believe you can guess it. Indeed, Wang Hao fulfilled his promise and achieved final victory. However, from this sudden event, I saw many shortcomings in Wang Hao. Ling Chen, you must know, the level of martial arts is not the standard to measure a person. Truly powerful individuals are strong mentally, not relying on external forces. Wang Hao has stayed at the Heavenly Mechanism Pavilion for years, practicing diligently, rarely going out. Because of this, he has many deficiencies in several aspects, including personal character. Therefore, when he came to me earlier to fulfill the agreement, I rejected him. Of course, considering his master's face, I gave him a book of mental methods for him to ponder on his own, which can be regarded as me making an effort."

So that's how it is!

Ling Chen nodded to himself. No wonder when he saw Wang Hao earlier, he had a stern face and hurled harsh words at him, it turned out to be because he was rejected by Tong Zhentian.

If it were before, Ling Chen might have felt some sympathy for him. But now, Ling Chen does not think he deserves any sympathy at all. Previously, Wang Hao targeted him everywhere, causing him a lot of discomfort.

"Elder Tong," Ling Chen pondered for a moment, shifting the topic away from Wang Hao, and asked, "Do you know Su He, Elder Su?"

"You mean Su He?" Tong Zhentian looked at Ling Chen with interest and said, "You know him? Su He, like Wang Hao's master, is considered an old friend of mine. Unfortunately, Su He has been completely silent for years, I'm afraid he..."

"Elder Su is still alive." Without waiting for Tong Zhentian to finish speaking, Ling Chen interjected.

"Alive?" Tong Zhentian's eyes lit up, and he eagerly asked, "Are you sure?"

Ling Chen nodded and said, "Elder Tong, frankly speaking, Elder Su is not exactly my master. Although we don't have the title of master and disciple, we are practically that, many of my skills are taught by him."

"Then why didn't he come to see me?"

"Back then, Elder Su thought his days were numbered, so he chose to leave the Heavenly Mechanism Pavilion to find a place to quietly wait for his end. However, what Elder Su didn't expect was that after he let go of everything, he actually comprehended a higher realm of martial arts. Since then, Elder Su has been living in seclusion by the sea, never returning to the Heavenly Mechanism Pavilion again."

Hearing this, Tong Zhentian couldn't help but burst into laughter, "I never would have thought, I assumed that old man had long passed away, but it turns out he's still alive. Good, good! Splendid." Tong Zhentian's tone was very excited, he stood up and walked to the cabinet, taking out a bottle of wine.

"Come, Ling Chen, have a couple of drinks with me."

Ling Chen smiled faintly, he could tell that Tong Zhentian was very pleased to learn that Su He was still alive. It was evident that the friendship between these two was not ordinary.

After three cups of wine, Tong Zhentian became more talkative.

"Ling Chen, a person shouldn't be petty-minded; it's essential to have magnanimity. In this regard, Wang Hao is somewhat lacking, which is the main reason I refused to take him as my disciple. But you're

different, unpretentious, mature, and steady, being able to achieve this at your age is indeed not easy. In my opinion, although your skill isn't on par with Wang Hao's, you excel far beyond him. Remember, skill can slowly become stronger, but a person's character is key—it is hard to change one's nature."

While speaking, Tong Zhentian lifted the wine bottle, filled a cup for Ling Chen, and asked, "Did Old Su teach you the Nine Yang Qiankun Step?"

"Elder Su taught me."

"Is that so?" Tong Zhentian smiled and said, "It seems Old Su truly considers you his direct disciple. You know, Old Su and all of us here, each has his own exclusive technique, Old Su's unique skill is the Nine Yang Qiankun Step, Wang Hao's master's exclusive technique is the Shattered Leaf Step, and... oh, there's also Du Kang from the Yangxin Pavilion, his exclusive technique is his wine." Mentioning Du Kang, Tong Zhentian spoke with interest, "That old guy claims to be the Alcohol Immortal, able to drink a thousand cups without getting drunk, using his self-made wine paired with his exclusive mental method, it's quite extraordinary. If you get a chance, you can experience it."

Hearing this, Ling Chen said with a contained smile, "Elder Tong, no need to experience that, honestly, I also know Elder Du's exclusive technique."

"You know it too?" Tong Zhentian paused, looking at Ling Chen in disbelief, and asked, "You're not pulling my leg, are you?"

"Elder Tong, what are you saying, how could I dare to pull your leg? When I was at the Heavenly Mechanism Pavilion, I accidentally met Elder Du, and later when he took a liking to me, he taught me his exclusive technique."

"Ha-ha! You're really lucky, monopolizing the techniques of two Heavenly List masters. Ah, what am I supposed to do about this."

Ling Chen asked puzzled, "Elder Tong, what do you mean by that?"

"Even if you didn't come to see me tonight, I would have gone to find you," Tong Zhentian said, "You saved me, and also saved my granddaughter, this favor is so great I can't repay it. So, after thinking it over, I've decided to return part of the favor."

"Oh?" Ling Chen's eyes gleamed with curiosity, "How does Elder Tong plan to repay?"

Tong Zhentian paused for each word and said, "With my exclusive technique."

Seeing Ling Chen in a daze, Tong Zhentian continued, "Don't underestimate my exclusive technique, compared to Old Su's Nine Yang Qiankun Step, it's not inferior in any way."

Hearing this, Ling Chen, once having regained his senses, quickly waved his hands and said, "Not at all, Elder Tong, you misunderstood me, I didn't mean to look down on it, I just... I just don't know how to describe my feelings."

When Tong Zhentian expressed his intention to teach him the exclusive technique, Ling Chen was truly shocked. He felt his luck was too good, even encountering such a rare stroke of luck.

An exclusive technique of a Heavenly List master is enough to drive countless people crazy.

Ling Chen, restraining the joy in his heart, cautiously asked, "Elder Tong, you... you really want to do this?"

"Of course." Tong Zhentian said carelessly, "An exclusive technique, after all, is a skill, and it's bound to be passed on to others sooner or later; I can't take it to the grave. For years, I've been searching for a suitable apprentice to cultivate as a direct disciple. Unfortunately, such talents are too few. If you didn't have a master, I would definitely take you as my direct disciple. But you are a disciple of Old Su, I can't take what's already claimed. After thinking it over, I decided to pass the exclusive technique to you."

"Thank you, Elder Tong!" Ling Chen quickly stood up, 'thud' went to his knees respectfully, and kowtowed three times.

Tong Zhentian did not stop Ling Chen's actions, only smiled contentedly.

"Alright, get up."

Ling Chen nodded, got up, and stood beside Tong Zhentian.

"Follow me."

With that said, Tong Zhentian led Ling Chen straight to the rooftop of the villa.

Chapter 863: Stolen Equipment (Part 1)

The night was deep.

Tonight, in East Sea City, there were no stars or moon, a cool breeze lightly brushing through the air, gently swaying the branches just sprouting with new buds, creating a rustling sound.

This is the main production base of the Hongyu Group, located in the outskirts of East Sea City, covering a factory area of several thousand square meters. The Hongyu Group's business almost covers all industries, with lucrative ventures in many fields. In this main production base, there is processing, manufacturing, and finished product packaging, mainly focusing on electronic and electrical manufacturing.

At this time, it was already past eleven in the evening, and the workers in the production base had long fallen asleep. The surrounding dormitory buildings were all plunged into darkness, except for a few security personnel with flashlights patrolling back and forth, surveying the surroundings.

"Master, this is the place."

Outside the production base, a few people came at an unknown time. Leading them was an old man who appeared to be around sixty years old, with a lean and frail physique, giving off an impression of being scrawny like a stick. Beside the old man were three others, and if Ling Chen were here, he would immediately recognize their identities.

Wearing a silver mask was Zhu Hong, Chu Huaiyang, and another, Song Mingzhe. The appearance of these three at the same time left no doubt about the old man's identity—it was Chen Quan, who had escaped from the Heavenly Mechanism Pavilion not long ago.

Under the support of Zhu Hong and the others, Chen Quan looked at the production base not far away and asked, "Disciple, are you sure this place has what we're looking for?"

"Master, don't worry. I've already thoroughly checked everything. The equipment at this production base is very comprehensive, and there are many things we can utilize," Zhu Hong replied confidently.

"Alright then. This matter is in your hands. I'll wait outside, but don't take too long."

"Yes!" Zhu Hong responded and immediately signaled to Chu Huaiyang and Song Mingzhe beside him to follow him into the production base.

Watching Zhu Hong and the others' silhouettes disappear into the darkness, Chen Quan walked to the side by himself, leaning against a tree trunk with his arms folded, looking relaxed.

After being trapped in the Heavenly Mechanism Pavilion for so many years, he was finally freed, feeling completely at ease. Especially when he thought about the things he was going to do next, a cold smile appeared on his thin face.

"After wasting so many years, it's time to make up for what I've lost."

An hour later, the gate of the production base slowly opened. A cargo truck then drove out from inside the base and parked next to Chen Quan. The window rolled down, and Zhu Hong poked his head out from the driver's seat, saying, "Master, it's all done, get in the car."

"Very good." Chen Quan nodded with a smile and said, "It's time for the second step."

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Early the next morning.

Ling Chen and He Ziyun left the villa and directly headed to Beijing Airport, then took the 10 o'clock flight to East Sea City.

By noon, Ling Chen and his companion walked out of the airport terminal, where a Mercedes-Benz was already parked on the roadside, waiting for their arrival.

"Chen!"

Seeing Jiang Hao running towards them, Ling Chen smiled slightly, "Sorry for making you come all this way."

"Chen, what are you talking about? It's no trouble at all," Jiang Hao said as he greeted He Ziyun and invited them into the car.

As the Mercedes-Benz drove along the road, Ling Chen looked at the endless stream of people outside the car window and asked, "Jiang Hao, has everything been peaceful lately?"

"Chen, to be honest, things haven't been going too well recently."

"What happened?"

Jiang Hao opened his mouth, his expression somewhat hesitant, looking like he wanted to speak but stopped. Noticing Jiang Hao's change in expression, Ling Chen said, "Just say it."

"Chen, it's about Xiong," Jiang Hao hesitated for a moment, finally speaking up, "Xiong hasn't been acting normally lately. When we first took over East Sea City, didn't we divide the territories clearly? Everything was fine at first, everybody was just taking care of their own areas without crossing boundaries. However, ever since Haozi returned to manage the Hongyu Group, things started to change. Because Haozi will take over the management of the Hongyu Group, he won't have time or energy to handle his territory, so he handed it over to us to help manage. I discussed this with Xiong, and we divided Haozi's territory between us, each managing half without interference."

"If everything was clear, why was there conflict?" Ling Chen asked.

Jiang Hao smiled bitterly and said, "It was all fine at first, but then Xiong's men suddenly came to my territory to cause trouble on purpose, taking away a lot of my business. Moreover, his men even spread the word that Haozi's former territory now belongs to Xiong. When I found out about this, I immediately called Xiong. He told me he was very busy and not aware of the matter but promised to investigate and give me an explanation. However, several days have passed, and there's no movement from Xiong. His men keep causing trouble for me every day. Chen, we're all brothers; I don't want any unpleasantness, so I've been enduring to avoid conflict with Xiong. But what he's doing is quite unethical. I've called him several times, but it's always his assistant answering, with all sorts of excuses, refusing to let me speak to Xiong directly. Chen, what do you think I should do about this?"

"Okay, I got it. Don't worry, Xiong probably isn't that kind of person; maybe there's some misunderstanding."

"Chen, I don't think it's a misunderstanding. I'm wondering if it's because of your different treatment that made Xiong upset, and that's why he's doing this."

"Different treatment?" Ling Chen looked at Jiang Hao in confusion and asked, "What do you mean by that?"

"Chen, have you forgotten? When the research base was set up, you instructed us only to inform me and Haozi about it, but not Xiong. Later, when you told Xiong to go to the research base for refuge, he surely must have heard some rumors, feeling upset, thinking you trust me and Haozi more, and consider him an outsider. Chen, honestly, I've never understood why you keep your guard up against Xiong, who has been with us from the beginning. His loyalty should be unquestionable, why would you keep something from him?"

Ling Chen thought for a moment and said, "I have my reasons. Okay, don't trouble yourself with this; I'll find an opportunity to speak with Xiong to clear up the misunderstanding."

As they spoke, the Mercedes-Benz had already arrived outside the research base.

Getting out of the car, Ling Chen led He Ziyun and Jiang Hao through the gate and straight towards the control center of the base.

Upon reaching the control center, Hu Fei saw Ling Chen and the others arriving and grinned, "You finally decided to come back."

Chapter 864 Equipment Theft (2)

"Hey, have those people who came last time settled in?" Ling Chen asked.

"You mean them?" Hu Fei pointed to the busy staff in the control center and chuckled, "Ling Chen, I have to say, you've finally done something right."

Hearing this, Ling Chen asked in confusion, "What's up?"

"Those people you brought in this time are real talents, far better than those I used to hire. After working for so long, I finally feel like a leader. I used to have to do everything myself, but now, with their help, I don't have to do anything. Just one word from me, and they take care of everything. Hey! Why don't you think of some way to recruit more talent?"

"Give it a rest!" Ling Chen replied irritably, "I'm not a recruitment agency. Be content with the help you've got." After saying that, Ling Chen asked, "By the way, where's Boss Tang?"

"Probably sleeping in his room. You don't need to worry about him; he's living the good life." With that, Hu Fei pointed to the big screen and said, "You've come at the right time. Something big happened last night related to the Hongyu Group."

At the mention of 'Hongyu Group', Ling Chen's heart sank immediately, and he hurriedly asked, "What happened to Wanqing?"

"Relax, Miss Nanrong is fine. The incident occurred at Hongyu Group's production base." Saying this, Hu Fei pressed a key, and a news report immediately started playing on the big screen.

"This is this morning's news. In the early hours of last night, the Hongyu Group's production base was breached by outsiders; one security guard was killed, three were injured, and five are in critical

condition at the hospital. Besides the attack on the security guards, many high-tech pieces of equipment at the production base were stolen."

"Theft?" Ling Chen sighed with relief and asked, "So the production base was only burglarized."

"If it were just a burglary, we wouldn't need to be so tense. The issue is, the stolen equipment is all high-tech production equipment. According to our intelligence, Hongyu Group recently imported several advanced machines from abroad, specifically for manufacturing high-precision electronic chips. Such advanced equipment is rare; only five sets exist domestically, and Hongyu Group owns one set. I roughly estimated that on the international market, the total value of those advanced machines is 200 million US dollars."

"That expensive?" Ling Chen was shocked and puzzled, "Do you think those killers and thieves were after money, or was there another motive?"

"This morning, I sent people to the scene for investigation. Based on the evidence we've gathered, the burglars were highly professional and skilled. Additionally, we found some unusual wounds on the victims." As Hu Fei spoke, he typed on the keyboard. Soon, a close-up photo of a wound appeared on the big screen.

Ling Chen carefully examined the photo, a strange expression flashing across his face.

This wound... It doesn't seem man-made, plus there's a neat row of teeth marks surrounding it.

"It looks like something bit the person."

"Exactly," Hu Fei nodded, "I thought the same. I took an imprint of the bite marks and, using 3D modeling technology, created a rough model. Comparing this model with online searches, we discovered the wounds on the guards were caused by a kind of fierce animal."

"A fierce animal?" Ling Chen was slightly stunned and asked, "This is East Sea City. There's no forest nearby. Where did a beast come from?"

"That, I don't know. According to the investigation, we are 100% sure that the beast was a leopard. Given all these factors, that's why I said the equipment thieves were not simple."

A leopard, could it be... Song Mingzhe?

A name suddenly popped into Ling Chen's mind. There's no way a beast could wander near East Sea City unless someone is controlling a leopard to commit crimes. Among those Ling Chen knows, only Song Mingzhe has such an ability.

Also, as far as he knows, Song Mingzhe has been in East Sea City recently, so he's highly suspicious. If this incident involves Song Mingzhe, it surely touches upon Zhu Hong and Chen Quan.

What exactly are they planning? Ling Chen pondered with a slight frown.

"Ling Chen, Ling Chen!" Hu Fei called several times, asking, "What are you thinking?"

Ling Chen looked up at Hu Fei and asked in return, "Have you checked for Zhu Hong's whereabouts lately?"

"Are you kidding? Not only have I checked, but I've also assembled a team specifically for Zhu Hong's case. But that kid is very cunning. It's been so long, and we haven't found a trace of him; no idea where he's hiding." After saying this, Hu Fei suddenly reacted and asked, "You mention Zhu Hong now; could it be that the Hongyu Group incident is related to him?"

Ling Chen nodded, "I think he is implicated. Hu Fei, gather some information on those high-tech devices and see what they can do. Zhu Hong went to so much trouble to steal those devices; his purpose must be significant."

"Alright, I understand. I'll arrange for someone to investigate right away."

"Notify me immediately if you have any news. I have something to do; I'm heading out now."

"Where to?"

Ling Chen pointed to the news broadcast on the big screen and left the control center without another word.

After leaving the research base, Ling Chen drove his Mercedes directly to the Hongyu Group's production base. Since the production base is on the outskirts of East Sea City, he had a long drive ahead. It took him over half an hour on the road before he arrived outside the production base.

Getting out of the car, Ling Chen surveyed the scene and saw a Rolls-Royce and several Land Rovers parked outside the production base, alongside several police cars.

Just as expected!

Ling Chen nodded silently, recognizing the Rolls-Royce as Nanrong Wanqing's ride. With such a significant incident at Hongyu Group, Nanrong Wanqing, as the chairwoman, would surely be here to offer her sympathies.

After walking through the gate and several dozen meters inside, he saw a yellow police tape set up not far away with a few officers collecting evidence within its perimeter.

Ling Chen noticed a human outline sketched onto the ground within the police line, likely the posture of a casualty when found.

After a glance, Ling Chen turned to leave. Just then, a familiar voice called out, "Ling Chen!"

Turning around, Ling Chen saw Liang Zhao Hui in a suit quickly approaching, waving a greeting.

"Liang," Ling Chen's lips curled into a subtle smile, his handsome face showing faint warmth as he strode forward to meet him.

Chapter 865 An Unusual Visitor

"Ling Chen, you've finally returned. I haven't seen you for so long; I thought you had resigned." Liang Zhao Hui patted Ling Chen's shoulder and said, "Let's go. The Chairman and the manager are over there getting a briefing. Let's go and take a look together."

Ling Chen nodded. The Chairman Liang Zhao Hui mentioned was Nanrong Wanqing, and the manager referred to Nanrong Hao. Nanrong Hao was now in charge of managing the family business and needed a suitable position. Because his experience was too shallow to oversee everything, Nanrong Wanqing initially arranged for him to serve as a manager, with plans to gradually elevate his status within the Hongyu Group as he gained experience.

Inside the office building of the production base, Ling Chen and Liang Zhao Hui arrived outside the reception room on the second floor. Before entering, they heard the sound of crying coming from inside.

Ling Chen glanced inside through the door and saw more than a dozen men and women of different ages sitting in the reception room, wiping tears from their eyes, faces full of grief.

No need to ask; it was clear these were the families of the victims.

"Everyone, we are all saddened by such an event, but we must remember that the dead cannot be brought back. We hope you will stay strong through your grief. Please rest assured that Hongyu Group will work together with the police to capture the perpetrator and punish them severely. Additionally, Hongyu Group will do everything in its power to handle the arrangements for the deceased employees."

It was Nanrong Wanqing speaking. Facing so many families, as the Chairman of Hongyu Group, she had to make a statement to reassure them.

"Nanrong Hao, do your best to comfort everyone. I'm going to check with the police about the situation." With that, Nanrong Wanqing walked alone towards the exit of the reception room.

At the door, Nanrong Wanqing suddenly stopped, her clear, beautiful eyes fixing on Ling Chen standing outside, unable to come to her senses for quite some time.

Their eyes met, and Ling Chen's gaze lingered on Nanrong Wanqing's exquisite face, feeling a wave of sadness rise in his heart. She had lost quite a bit of weight compared to the last time they met. Her tired and haggard appearance was evident in her eyes.

"Wanqing!"

After a moment of silent exchange, Ling Chen softly called out Nanrong Wanqing's name.

Hearing the familiar voice at her ear, Nanrong Wanqing bit her thin lip gently, her bright eyes welling up with tears.

"You've returned?"

Ling Chen nodded lightly and smiled, "I'm back!"

Standing nearby, Liang Zhao Hui glanced at Ling Chen, then at Nanrong Wanqing, and quickly made an exit, attempting to avoid disturbing the two.

After Liang Zhao Hui left, Nanrong Wanqing turned and walked towards the balcony behind the reception room, leaning on the railing, gazing into the distance. Ling Chen followed her, and looking at Nanrong Wanqing's slender back, he couldn't help but step forward and wrap his arms around her waist from behind, softly saying, "I'm sorry for making you worry during this time."

Feeling the warmth of Ling Chen's large hands, Nanrong Wanqing turned around, gazed directly into Ling Chen's eyes, and softly said, "As long as you returned safely, I don't care about anything else." After speaking, she couldn't help but ask, "Weren't you imprisoned? Why were you released?"

"It's a long story; I'll explain in detail when there's time. By the way, you shouldn't get involved with what's happening at the production base this time. I'll take care of it for you."

Upon hearing this, Nanrong Wanqing asked, "Do you know who was behind it?"

"More or less, although there's no evidence, I have my guesses. However, at this point, I'm still not sure about their whereabouts and purposes. Wanqing, try to stay home these days and reduce going out. I'm worried about your safety."

"My safety? Why?"

"Have you forgotten Zhu Hong? You're more aware than anyone of how he feels about you. But everything Zhu Hong owned was destroyed by us. Considering his character, do you think he would let it go? As far as I know, Zhu Hong has stayed in East Sea City and never left. For the sake of your safety, it's better to follow my arrangements."

"With you by my side, I'm not afraid of anything."

"Sister."

As they spoke, Nanrong Hao came over from the reception room. Upon seeing Ling Chen and Nanrong Wanqing embracing, Nanrong Hao was slightly stunned, quickly closed his eyes, and turned around, saying, "Brother Chen, I didn't know you were back. Don't be mad; I didn't see anything. Ahem! I still have things to do, so I'll leave now. You two carry on."

Hearing her brother's teasing, Nanrong Wanqing's face turned red, and she quickly pushed Ling Chen's hands away, asking, "Enough, don't leave! Tell me, what do you need?"

Nanrong Hao awkwardly smiled and said, "Sister, I just spoke with the families. Hongyu Group will provide some assistance, thirty thousand per family, and two million for the families of the deceased. What do you think?"

"Add an additional ten thousand per family, and especially for the families of the deceased, add one million more. After all, no amount of money can bring back a life."

"Alright, I know what to do."

After handling the compensation for the families, Ling Chen took Nanrong Wanqing back to the Rolls-Royce, and under the escort of several Range Rovers, they drove straight to Wealthy Manor.

Returning to the Nanrong Family, Ling Chen first went to visit Nanrong Yong. Some time ago, Nanrong Yong was attacked and nearly lost his life. Fortunately, he was saved just in time to preserve his aged life. According to Nanrong Wanqing, Nanrong Yong was in a coma for almost a month before waking up.

"Old man, how's your health?"

"I'm fine." Nanrong Yong waved his hand and asked, "Ling Chen, I haven't seen you around recently. What have you been up to?"

"Just had some private matters to take care of in Beijing. I just got back today."

Nanrong Yong sighed and said, "You're all adults now; you have your own thoughts about many things. At my age, there are things I'd like to manage, but I can't. Also, after experiencing so much, I've come to terms with things. I don't expect my descendants to achieve great things; being safe and sound is enough. Ling Chen, I know you are capable. Please take care of Wanqing and Nanrong Hao for me; make sure nothing happens to them."

"Don't worry, old man. If anyone wants to harm them, they'll have to cross over my dead body first."

After chatting leisurely with Nanrong Yong, Ling Chen returned to the villa where Nanrong Wanqing lived.

In the spacious living room, Nanrong Wanqing, having changed into loungewear, was sitting on the sofa, revealing her fair little feet, holding a remote, watching the news on TV.

Seeing her relaxed state, Ling Chen smiled slightly and walked over.

However, before Ling Chen could sit down, Liu Kun strode in from outside, looking troubled.

"Mr. Ling, Miss."

"Uncle Liu."

Noticing Liu Kun's expression, Ling Chen asked, "Uncle Liu, what's happened?"

"There's a guest outside who says they want to see you two."

"A guest?" Ling Chen and Nanrong Wanqing exchanged glances and asked, "Do you know who it is?"

"He said his name is Zhu Hong."

Chapter 866 I Want Your Blood (Part 1)

Zhu Hong is here?

Ling Chen was momentarily stunned, his eyes instantly turning sharp. Hmph! That guy's guts are really big; I was just fretting over not being able to find him, and here he is, walking right into my trap.

However, despite Zhu Hong walking in of his own accord, Ling Chen didn't feel pleased. Instead, he was a bit worried. He knew Zhu Hong's character too well; if he wasn't absolutely confident, Zhu Hong would never show up in front of him so easily. This time, by coming to the Nanrong Family, Zhu Hong certainly wasn't afraid of being caught by him.

After thinking for a moment, Nanrong Wanqing asked, seeing Ling Chen's delayed response, "Ling Chen, what should we do? Should we see him?"

"See him!" Ling Chen replied indifferently. "Guests are guests, and we can't just chase them away. Uncle Liu, would you kindly invite him in?"

"Okay." Liu Kun nodded and turned to leave the living room.

After Liu Kun left, Nanrong Wanqing hesitated and asked, "Should I avoid him?"

"It's up to you. If you don't want to see him, you can go upstairs first and come down after he's gone." Ling Chen knew the relationship between Nanrong Wanqing and Zhu Hong, having grown up together like childhood sweethearts. Once upon a time, Nanrong Wanqing was deeply in love with Zhu Hong. If it weren't for the too many bad deeds Zhu Hong committed and the emergence of Ling Chen, perhaps it would be Zhu Hong accompanying her now instead of Ling Chen.

After much hesitation, Nanrong Wanqing eventually chose to avoid the meeting. In her eyes, the current Zhu Hong was no longer the one who cared for her and thought of her in everything like he did in the past.

Especially since the last time when Zhu Hong sent people to kidnap her and attempted to harm her, she utterly lost hope in him. Now, it was better to avoid seeing him at all.

After Nanrong Wanqing left, Ling Chen had just taken a seat when he saw Liu Kun leading Zhu Hong into the villa from outside.

"Uncle Liu, you can go back to your work now."

"Alright." Liu Kun acknowledged and turned to leave the villa, gently closing the door behind him.

"Guests are guests, have a seat!" Ling Chen looked at the silver-masked Zhu Hong and gestured to the nearby sofa.

Seeing Ling Chen's calm demeanor, Zhu Hong couldn't help but laugh, "What, you don't plan to catch me right here and now? Even if you don't say, I know you wish you could teach me a hard lesson."

"Exactly." Ling Chen unreservedly nodded, "If I could, not only would I beat you up, I'd finish you off for doing those unspeakable acts."

Zhu Hong laughed upward, walked to the sofa at his own pace, then poured himself a full glass of tea from the teapot on the coffee table. He then held the teacup in one hand, gently swirled it, blew the tea leaves floating on top, and took a small sip.

With his throat moistened by a mouthful of strong tea, Zhu Hong chuckled and said, "I admit I've done many bad things and killed many people. But for you to describe me as utterly heartless might be overstating it. I'm bad, but not that bad. Besides, compared to you, I'm far behind. Ling Chen, don't think I don't know about your past. From what I know, you've killed far more people than I have."

"I have killed people, but only those who deserved to die. Moreover, I never claimed to be a good person. Lay no blame on those who don't trouble me, but if someone crosses me, I will repay them tenfold. That's my principle. But you, you've slaughtered so many innocent people. Didn't you ever consider their families?"

Zhu Hong waved dismissively, "If you concern yourself with every small consideration, how can you achieve great things? Those who achieve greatness don't worry about trifles. Throughout history, how many heroes and kings have built their empires on heaps of corpses. So what if some people die? As long as I succeed, history will be written by me. Ling Chen, being a smart person, you should understand. Nobody cares what means you use; if you achieve your goals, you're the victor in everyone's eyes."

Ling Chen retorted, "It's the age of law now; you're not above the law." Here, Ling Chen paused with a chuckle, "Why am I telling you this, preaching to the deaf? Zhu Hong, regardless of what path you wish to take, it's none of my business. I'm not someone overflowing with a sense of justice, sticking my nose into others' affairs. If I could, I'd rather be traveling with my woman, enjoying drinks, snacking late at night, and occasionally flirting with beauties. But you shouldn't repeatedly provoke me, causing me trouble. If you threaten my interests, don't blame me for being unkind."

"What do you intend to do?" Zhu Hong asked, gazing at Ling Chen with an enigmatic smile. "I'm right here, why not catch me?"

"Are you the kind to willingly walk into a trap?" Ling Chen, with a blank expression, replied, "I've long figured it out. If you dare to come looking for me, you must be certain there's no way I can touch you. Given that, why should I waste time? Speak, why have you come to see me?"

Zhu Hong laughed heartily, "As I said, you're smart. Fair enough, since you have this awareness, let's be frank."

As the words fell, Zhu Hong's laughter abruptly stopped, his eyes emanating a chilling intent.

"I came to ask for something from you."

"What?"

"I want your blood."

Blood?

Hearing Zhu Hong's request, Ling Chen was momentarily stunned, filled with questions. He had expected Zhu Hong to make an unreasonable demand, but not that it would be for his blood.

"What do you want my blood for?"

"I have my purposes. Don't worry, I know the rules. As long as you're willing, I can offer you something valuable in exchange."

Ling Chen's eyes flashed as he calmly said, "And if I refuse?"

"Don't rush to refuse," Zhu Hong smiled knowingly, "Once you know my terms, I doubt you'll say no."

"Alright, let's hear it."

"No need to speak further; once you've seen this, you'll understand." With that, Zhu Hong took a photograph from his suit pocket and placed it on the coffee table.

As he looked at the photo's content, Ling Chen's pupils slightly contracted, giving off a chilling murderous aura.

"I almost forgot, it was you who killed Nanrong Yuan back then and also took Little Hua."

"Don't be angry. Ling Chen, you know who Nanrong Yuan was. Unfortunately, Wanqing has been kept in the dark. How sad would she be if she knew her father was killed." At this point, Zhu Hong changed the subject, "Of course, I'm not using this to threaten you; I know it's useless against you. No matter how long this is concealed, Wanqing will find out eventually. But do you not care about this little girl's safety?"

"Where is she?" Ling Chen asked in a deep voice.

Chapter 867 I Want Your Blood (Part 2)

"Rest assured, she's very safe right now, in a place where no one can find or harm her. But if too much time passes, I can't guarantee her safety. So if you want to save her, you better act quickly; don't wait until she's dead to come begging me."

"Oh, right!" Zhu Hong swirled the teacup in his hand and smiled slightly, "I need to remind you first. I'm not giving that little girl to you because she's not in my possession, nor do I have the ability to snatch her from those people. So I can only provide you with information, tell you her specific location. As for what to do, that's up to you and has nothing to do with me."

Upon hearing this, Ling Chen immediately fell into deep thought.

There's no denying that Zhu Hong's offer is very tempting. But the problem is that the one making the offer is Zhu Hong. If it were someone else, Ling Chen might believe it, but he simply cannot trust Zhu Hong.

He knows Zhu Hong too well; this guy would never let him succeed so easily, and it might be full of traps. Besides, the most crucial point is that Ling Chen worries that risking his life might end up with fake information. If that were the case, he'd suffer a massive loss.

Moreover, given Zhu Hong's personality, he's very likely to do such a thing.

Just as Ling Chen was hesitating, Zhu Hong leisurely said, "What, such a simple thing requires so much thought? It seems that woman doesn't hold much weight in your heart."

Hearing this, Ling Chen frowned slightly, staring silently at Zhu Hong, his eyes flickering. After a while, Ling Chen asked, "What do you want my blood for?"

Ling Chen found this very strange. He had been through all sorts of requests and deals but never exchanged his own blood. So he really wanted to figure out Zhu Hong's true intentions.

Zhu Hong put down his teacup and said, "Don't you think you're asking too many questions? In short, I've stated my terms, whether you agree or not is your business. However, don't blame me for not warning you; should you delay further, I can't guarantee that little girl will still be alive."

With that, Zhu Hong stood up on his own, leaving a note with a phone number, and walked straight out of the villa.

Watching Zhu Hong's departing figure, Ling Chen squinted his eyes, remaining silent.

Just last night, Zhu Hong had stolen a set of cutting-edge equipment worth over a hundred million from the production base of Hongyu Group. Today, he comes up proposing a trade for Ling Chen's blood. Connecting these events, Ling Chen felt that Zhu Hong's motives were not simple, which was the main reason for Ling Chen's hesitation in making a decision.

One must always be vigilant, especially with someone like Zhu Hong; he must be cautious and careful.

Not long after Zhu Hong left, Nanrong Wanqing came down from upstairs.

Seeing Ling Chen dazed on the sofa, Nanrong Wanqing asked, "What are you thinking about?"

Hearing Nanrong Wanqing's voice beside him, Ling Chen immediately snapped back to reality.

"Nothing," Ling Chen replied lightly.

"What did Zhu Hong want from you just now?" Nanrong Wanqing asked curiously.

"What else could someone like him want, other than trying to get some benefits from me." At this point, without waiting for Nanrong Wanqing to ask further, Ling Chen cut her off, saying, "Don't worry about it. I'll handle Zhu Hong's matter."

In the blink of an eye, it had been three days since returning to East Sea City.

According to the message from Beijing, Ling Chen's matter was temporarily suppressed, and the senior government officials wouldn't pursue it intentionally. However, Pang Jiulin reminded Ling Chen that it's better to keep a low profile during this time.

For the past few days, Ling Chen stayed at home and saw that billionaire Yang He several times on TV. That old guy was donating money and goods everywhere under the guise of a philanthropist, building schools, setting up factories, providing jobs, and becoming a frequent guest of governments in various regions.

Ling Chen felt speechless about this. According to his temperament, people like Yang He, who secretly fund the God Organization, should be thrown into jail and pay the price. Unfortunately, there are too many compromises in today's society, and many things can't be done according to his ideas and wishes.

Sitting on the villa's rooftop terrace, Ling Chen crossed his legs, gazing at the distant skyscrapers, idly twirling a piece of paper in his hand, his eyes slightly focused, reflecting a trace of sharpness.

Ling Chen had long memorized the phone number on the note, but he hadn't dialed it yet.

These few days, Ling Chen had been uncertain, not knowing what to do. After thinking it over, he didn't tell He Ziyun about this matter. He knew He Ziyun's temperament too well. Having raised Little Hua since childhood, their relationship was extraordinary. If He Ziyun knew about this, there was no guarantee he wouldn't act impulsively.

Is he really going to do this?

After pondering for a while, Ling Chen muttered to himself, his Mo Che-like pupils reflecting a hint of hesitation.

Forget it!

No matter what, he had to take a gamble.

With a rapid shift of thoughts, Ling Chen took out his phone, intending to dial the number on the note.

But just then, before Ling Chen could dial, his phone rang with a pleasant ringtone.

Seeing the incoming number displayed on the phone's screen, Ling Chen immediately answered the call and asked, "What's the matter?" After he finished speaking, it was unclear what the other party said, but Ling Chen's eyes gradually lit up, and he quickly said, "Got it. Wait for me, I'm heading to the hospital right now."

As he arrived by car at the City People's Hospital, Ling Chen rushed straight to the special care unit.

Outside the ward, Hu Fei, who had been waiting there for some time, quickly came forward. Before Hu Fei could speak, Ling Chen eagerly asked, "Where are they?"

Hu Fei pointed to two adjoining special care wards and said, "Inside, the doctors are examining them. Don't worry, I just asked the doctors, and their bodies are fine."

"That's good." Ling Chen breathed a sigh of relief and asked, "Where did you find them?"

"At a private sanatorium in East Sea City. I inquired, and at the time, Xia Mutong and Bai Huanjun both fainted outside the sanatorium, and were taken in by them. However, that sanatorium was not a legitimate place. Instead, it operated under the guise of charity, but was, in fact, an organ trafficking organization. Seeing Xia Mutong and Bai Huanjun unconscious and disoriented, they had the idea of removing their organs for sale. Fortunately, the police discovered them in time, raided their base, and rescued the two of them."

"The two of them are quite lucky." Ling Chen smiled slightly. No wonder they had been unable to find Xia Mutong and Bai Huanjun for so long; they had been controlled by someone.

Chapter 868 Old Friend Escapes from Danger

It wasn't long before the doctor from the special care ward came out. Ling Chen and Hu Fei rushed over, eagerly asking, "Doctor, how's my friend's condition?"

"The body is generally fine, but one of them has severe brain injury and is still in a coma. When she'll wake up depends on her fate."

"And the other?"

"His body's recovering quite fast, and he's fully conscious. You can go in and see him. But, don't talk too long. He just recovered and needs time to rest."

"Okay, thank you, doctor."

After inquiring about the patient's condition, Ling Chen and Hu Fei quickly walked into the special care ward.

At this moment, in the special care ward, Bai Huanjun lay on the bed, eyes open. Aside from looking a bit weak, he didn't seem like a critically ill patient.

Seeing Ling Chen enter from outside, Bai Huanjun's eyes lit up slightly as he struggled to sit up on the bed.

"Don't move!" Ling Chen hurriedly stopped Bai Huanjun, saying, "Your body hasn't fully recovered, just lie still for now, don't move around."

"No worries." Bai Huanjun smiled nonchalantly. "I've been lying here so long, my body's almost rusted."

Hu Fei walked to the bedside, patting Bai Huanjun's shoulder, and laughingly said, "Buddy, you're really lucky to be alive. If the cops hadn't arrived in time, your body might have been hollowed out by now."

"Great misfortune followed by great fortune. By the way, how's Officer Xia and Jiang Yunkai's condition?"

"They haven't recovered as well as you. The doctor said it'll probably take some time for them to wake up." Saying that, Ling Chen pulled up a chair next to the bed, looking at Bai Huanjun, and asked, "Do you remember what happened before?"

Bai Huanjun thought for a moment and nodded, "I do have some impressions, but it's not very clear."

After a pause, Bai Huanjun suddenly thought of something, mysteriously glanced at the closed door, then leaned towards Ling Chen, saying, "I feel like the effects of the God Organization's experiment on me have been permanently retained."

Hearing this, Ling Chen was slightly stunned and incredulously asked, "Are you sure?"

"Of course, I've tested it." Bai Huanjun said, "But, my body is still a bit weak now, and I can't fully exert that kind of power, but I can feel that the power is hidden in my body."

Ling Chen and Hu Fei exchanged glances, a hint of surprise in their eyes.

Originally, they thought the God Organization's experiments were temporary, and once Bai Huanjun's body recovered, the violent power in him would completely disappear. But now, it seems that's not the case; the power has been permanently retained.

Looking at Ling Chen's shocked expression, Bai Huanjun said, "That's not the most crucial issue. The most important part is that previously, that power affected the mind, turning one into a bloodthirsty beast. But now it's different, I can control that power while staying lucid. When I was confined in the sanatorium earlier, if those bastards hadn't injected me with anesthesia every day, I would have dealt with them a long time ago."

Ling Chen said thoughtfully, "In that case, the powers of Xia Mutong and Jiang Yunkai will also be retained."

"I don't know about that. Although all three of us went through the God Organization's experimental modifications, the final result depends on individual constitution. But, since I can retain mine, their issue shouldn't be significant."

"Forget it! Let's not discuss this for now; the most important thing is everyone's safe. You should rest well in the hospital for now; there are many things to be busy with at the base. Work can wait until you recover."

After saying that, Ling Chen got up, preparing to leave the ward. But just then, a thought seemed to cross his mind, and his eyes suddenly lit up.

Upon leaving the ward, Ling Chen went directly to the neighboring special care ward.

At this moment, lying in the spacious and bright ward was a woman, none other than the long unseen Xia Mutong.

Looking at Xia Mutong's somewhat pale cheeks, Ling Chen sighed inwardly. In his heart, he felt a sense of debt and guilt towards Xia Mutong.

Xia Mutong was originally an ordinary police officer, but because of him, she got involved with the God Organization and almost lost her life.

If possible, Ling Chen truly wished she hadn't gotten involved in this mess.

"Rest well, I'll come to see you again." Ling Chen said to himself, then turned and left the special care ward.

As Ling Chen stepped out of the door, Xia Mutong's eyelashes fluttered slightly, but soon returned to stillness.

Returning to the Nanrong Family, after greeting Nanrong Wanqing, Ling Chen went directly into his bedroom.

Taking out the phone and the phone number Zhu Hong had left behind, Ling Chen didn't think much and dialed the number directly.

Beep, beep...

As the ringing came from the other end, the phone was finally picked up after a few seconds.

"Ling Chen, you finally called. Although it's a few days late, it's about the time I expected."

"You're that sure I'd contact you?"

"Of course. You know me, and I know you. I know you're a sentimental person and wouldn't leave your friends in danger. Well then! Since you're calling, it means you've accepted my terms. Alright, I'll contact you again at 3 p.m. tomorrow. Come to meet me then. Remember, come alone."

"No problem, I'll wait for your message." After saying this, Ling Chen hung up the phone.

The next day.

After having lunch at the Hongyu Group, Ling Chen sauntered into Nanrong Hao's office and stayed until a little past two. As the clock on the wall pointed to 3 p.m., Ling Chen's phone in his pocket rang precisely on time.

Taking out his phone and looking at the caller ID, Ling Chen answered without hesitation, asking, "Where?"

"380 Sunset Street, someone will take you to meet me when you arrive."

"Alright, I'm heading over now."

Hanging up the phone, Ling Chen quickly left Nanrong Hao's office and drove to the destination.

Sunset Street!

In less than half an hour, Ling Chen reached the location provided by Zhu Hong. Following the address, Ling Chen soon found 380, which was a small grocery store, no more than twenty square meters, with various goods piled inside.

Standing at the entrance of the grocery store, Ling Chen glanced around, scanning the surrounding crowd for suspicious individuals. After a moment, a modern commercial vehicle slowly drove up from the roadside and stopped beside Ling Chen.

The door opened, and a man poked his head out, scrutinizing Ling Chen before tossing out two words, "Get in!"

Without asking questions, Ling Chen obediently followed the man's instructions.

Once inside the car, a man in the vehicle put a black hood over Ling Chen's head, blocking his sight.

In an instant, Ling Chen's vision was engulfed in darkness.

Chapter 869 Joy Valley (Part 1)

Although his eyes were blindfolded, it didn't hinder Ling Chen from remembering the route. As a former agent, Ling Chen possessed a wealth of formidable experience.

Before coming to the appointment, Ling Chen had studied the map of this area, memorizing the general routes. So, even with his eyes covered, he could still judge his location by the speed of the vehicle.

Sitting in the car, the man's hands kept busy, continuously searching Ling Chen, all electronic devices including his phone were found and thrown out of the car window.

The car drove on the road. By Ling Chen's estimation, it traveled for more than half an hour before gradually slowing down, eventually stopping at a quiet spot.

Ling Chen listened closely and found that the sound of car horns was far away. They should be in a rather secluded area.

In the midst of his thoughts, the car door was opened, and the man reached out, pulling Ling Chen off the car. Then, under the man's guidance, Ling Chen stumbled forward, step by step, in darkness. After walking for several minutes, he heard the sound of a door opening, followed by a series of footsteps.

Soon, Ling Chen sensed five or six people breathing around him.

"Take the head cover off."

The voice commanded, and the blindfold on Ling Chen's head was immediately removed. The bright lights dazzled him, and he slightly tilted his head. Once his eyes adjusted to the brightness, he looked around and saw Zhu Hong and Chu Huaiyang standing before him. Beside them stood several middle-aged men in lab coats.

"You finally came." Zhu Hong smiled at Ling Chen and said, "If you hesitated for another two or three days, I would have left. By then, even if you want to save the girl, it would be impossible."

"Cut the nonsense." Ling Chen coldly replied, "I've come as promised, now it's your turn to fulfill your promise."

"Don't rush. Before I tell you the intelligence, you must first undergo a check and provide some samples." As Zhu Hong spoke, he waved his hand, and several men in lab coats stepped forward with medical kits, rolling up Ling Chen's sleeves, then pulling out a syringe from their kits and piercing it into Ling Chen's vein.

As the doctor worked, the syringe filled with blood, almost reaching two hundred milliliters.

After collecting the blood, Ling Chen pressed on the needle mark and asked, "I've given you what you want. Is it time to hand over the intelligence now?"

"Of course," Zhu Hong smiled and said, "I am a man of my word." With the words, Zhu Hong pulled a piece of paper from his pocket, handed it to Ling Chen, and said, "The person you're looking for is here. However, as far as I know, it's just a temporary base. If you don't hurry, the girl may be moved. So, if you want to save her, don't waste time."

Ling Chen glanced at the address on the paper, turned around, and walked out without a word.

Watching Ling Chen leave, Chu Huaiyang beside him asked, "Do you really intend to let him go? Now that he's alone, if we join forces, there's at least a seventy percent chance we can keep him here."

"No need." Zhu Hong waved his hand with a meaningful smile, "Someone else will deal with him for us. Why waste effort and manpower on him?" After speaking, Zhu Hong looked at the men in lab coats and said, "Hurry up and process Ling Chen's blood into serum to use in experiments."

"Yes, Mr. Zhu, we will start immediately."

...

Research base.

Ling Chen passed the paper with the address in hand to Hu Fei, instructing, "Fatty, help me check this address and see where it's located."

Hu Fei made an OK gesture and immediately handed the paper to the nearby staff. While waiting for the result, Hu Fei looked at Ling Chen and said, "There's news about the batch of advanced equipment stolen from the Hongyu Group. Do you remember the experimental equipment we saw at the God Organization earlier? Although the equipment Zhu Hong stole slightly differs from the experimental equipment, it can be easily modified for experimental use. I think Zhu Hong's primary purpose for stealing that equipment is to set up a lab."

Ling Chen nodded, saying, "Last time Zhu Hong sent people to attack the research base, released Xia Mutong and the others, killed several researchers, and stole our experimental data. Zhu Hong was a member of the God Organization before, serving under Nanrong Yuan, and should be very

knowledgeable about human experiments. With our data and his experience, he can likely replicate the Lucifer experiment of the God Organization."

"So Zhu Hong is recruiting allies."

"Exactly," Ling Chen said, "When Zhu Hong approached me that day, from his words, I sensed his ambition." Pausing, Ling Chen continued, "I can actually understand Zhu Hong. Now that he's disfigured, lost everything, including his beloved woman, people like him typically have extreme ideas after psychological trauma. Zhu Hong is just that; the more he suffers, the stronger his desire to prove himself. Therefore, he wants to achieve great things, to make everyone look at him differently. Before achieving his goal, Zhu Hong will use all means. More importantly, Zhu Hong is no longer alone; he has help from experts like Chu Huaiyang, Song Mingzhe, and Chen Quan, making him more formidable."

"Then what should we do?" Hu Fei asked, "We can't just let him develop. Otherwise, sooner or later he'll be a threat to us."

As they spoke, Hu Fei's phone rang. He pulled it out, answered the call directly, and asked, "What's the result?... Okay, I understand."

Ending the call, Hu Fei said helplessly, "We searched the location you provided and found the place where you met Zhu Hong, but it's empty. I'll have someone retrieve nearby surveillance footage later, to see if we can find any clues."

"I wouldn't put too much hope in it. Zhu Hong is a very smart man, especially after experiencing so many events, he's more cautious than before and won't leave traces easily. However, as long as Zhu Hong is still in East Sea City, we can't let our guard down. Fatty, for advice on this matter, you'd better consult Boss Tang. He was formerly an FBI consultant for crime and understands criminal psychology well. He might help us find Zhu Hong."

"Sure, I'll consult him later." Hu Fei grinned, "Thanks for reminding me, I nearly forgot. Boss Tang is a professional, with his help, we'll certainly succeed."

Chapter 870 Joy Valley (2)

Before long, the staff at the control center found the address Zhu Hong provided.

Hu Fei leaned towards the computer screen, staring at the displayed information, and said with a furrowed brow, "This place... feels odd."

"What's odd about it?" Ling Chen asked curiously.

"The address Zhu Hong provided shows that the temporary base is located in an amusement park in East Sea City."

"Joy Valley?" Ling Chen was slightly taken aback. He certainly knew what Joy Valley was; simply put, it was a large amusement park.

This is going to be troublesome!

Ling Chen secretly thought. Joy Valley is a place for fun, with many visitors every day, especially lots of children. It's not convenient to act with a temporary base set up in such a place.

"Ling Chen, how do we search? That amusement park is huge, and the visitors are numerous. We don't have enough manpower. Even if we disperse all the visitors inside, we alone can't conduct a search."

Upon hearing Hu Fei's words, Ling Chen pondered for a moment. The issue Hu Fei raised was indeed a significant problem; if it couldn't be solved, it would be like searching for a needle in a haystack.

Thinking over and over, a flash of inspiration suddenly crossed Ling Chen's mind. Right! Since we don't have enough manpower, why not borrow some people to help?

"Fatty, come here." Ling Chen beckoned to Hu Fei and then whispered a few words in his ear.

After listening to Ling Chen's plan, Hu Fei's eyes lit up, and a crafty smile appeared on his round face as he chuckled, "Ling Chen, I didn't expect you to be so cunning, coming up with such a plan. Okay, you just wait, I'll arrange for someone to handle it."

Ling Chen reminded, "Remember, be cautious, very cautious. Don't hurt anyone. I don't want to be wanted as a terrorist."

"Rest assured, don't you trust my work?" Hu Fei said confidently.

...

Joy Valley.

It's afternoon on a Sunday, and Joy Valley is crowded with children coming to play. The park is divided into children's and adult's areas, covering tens of thousands, with dozens of amusement facilities and projects, attracting thousands of guests every day.

At this moment, at the entrance of Joy Valley, people were gathering densely, shoulder to shoulder, waiting in line to buy tickets and enter the park.

However, right at this moment, a sudden loud 'bang' echoed from within Joy Valley. Immediately, flames soared into the sky, thick smoke billowed, and a raging fire erupted in the northeast direction of the park, engulfing a wooden cabin in an instant.

As the explosion sounded, Joy Valley's alarm bells rang loudly, and all the tourists, with the help of staff, orderly rushed towards the emergency exits.

In less than half an hour, the entire Joy Valley was cleared of tourists. Meanwhile, two fire trucks and more than a dozen police cars arrived at the scene, sealing all entrances and exits of Joy Valley, prohibiting idle individuals from entering or leaving.

Thanks to the firefighters' efforts, it didn't take long for the fire in Joy Valley to be extinguished. Once the firefighting personnel left, several plainclothes detectives quickly began investigating the fire scene.

Ten minutes passed, and a detective responsible for on-site inspection changed his expression slightly and hurriedly took out his phone, dialing his superior's number.

"Hello! Chief, it's me. I just found remnants of explosives at the fire scene, including plastic bomb components. I suspect this fire wasn't accidental but deliberately caused by someone planting explosives in Joy Valley. Chief, these are military-grade bombs; ordinary people wouldn't have access... Yes, I understand. I'll immediately contact various branches and have them dispatch personnel to reinforce us."

At this moment, in the KFC restaurant opposite Joy Valley, Ling Chen, Hu Fei, and Tang Guolun sat at a window-side table, munching on fried chicken legs while observing the situation at Joy Valley.

"They're here!"

Hu Fei pointed at a dozen police cars driving up the road, including city SWAT's specialized armored vehicles, all arriving at Joy Valley.

Ling Chen scanned them briefly, nodded, and said, "The police reinforcements should be all here. Let them search first to help us scout the path, and we'll act once night falls."

"All the personnel are arranged." Tang Guolun chimed in: "Kaelina, Liu Dongsheng, you, and me, just the four of us. Joy Valley is under police control. We can't dispatch too many people to avoid getting caught by the police, or it'll be troublesome."

"That's enough!" Ling Chen replied. They are all people capable of handling things alone; with them acting, the issue shouldn't be too big.

Time slowly passed, and in the blink of an eye, nightfall arrived, enveloping the entire Joy Valley in moonlight.

To facilitate the police's search work, all the lights in Joy Valley were turned on. Suddenly, the entire park was brightly lit, as if it were daytime.

Due to the fire that occurred during the day, coupled with the high attention from the police, many reporters sensed something unusual. Therefore, starting in the afternoon, TV stations had been sending reporters and interview trucks to Joy Valley, surrounding the entrances and exits, waiting for the latest news.

After eating and drinking, Ling Chen, Tang Guolun, Liu Dongsheng, and Kaelina arrived at the northern side of Joy Valley. There stood a more than five meters high wall, and due to its height, no one could breach it, so the police did not arrange guards here.

Ling Chen looked up and then took a rope with a grappling hook from the car, throwing it forcefully upwards.

Soon, the grappling hook was firmly fixed at the top of the wall. With the help of the rope, Ling Chen and the other three successfully entered Joy Valley in no time.

"According to the plan we made earlier, we'll split into groups of two and act separately." After speaking, Ling Chen signaled to Kaelina, and the two quickly headed towards the east side of Joy Valley.

Joy Valley is divided into four areas: adult area, children's area, water activities area, and the visitor center. The four areas are located in the four directions of Joy Valley. To facilitate the search and save time, Ling Chen and Tang Guolun agreed that each would be responsible for two areas.

In no time, Ling Chen and Kaelina reached the adult area of Joy Valley. This area featured thrilling and exciting amusement projects: roller coasters, pirate ships, pendulum rides... and more.

Looking around, Ling Chen rubbed his nose, feeling a bit of a headache. The facilities here are too many, and the area is large; it might take two to three hours to search completely.

Ling Chen greatly admired those guys for setting up a temporary base in such a place. If not for the intelligence Zhu Hong provided, Ling Chen wouldn't have guessed it even after breaking his head.

While musing, Kaelina spoke up, "I'll go check that side; you handle this side. Keep in touch at all times; inform me immediately if anything happens."

"Alright, be careful yourself."